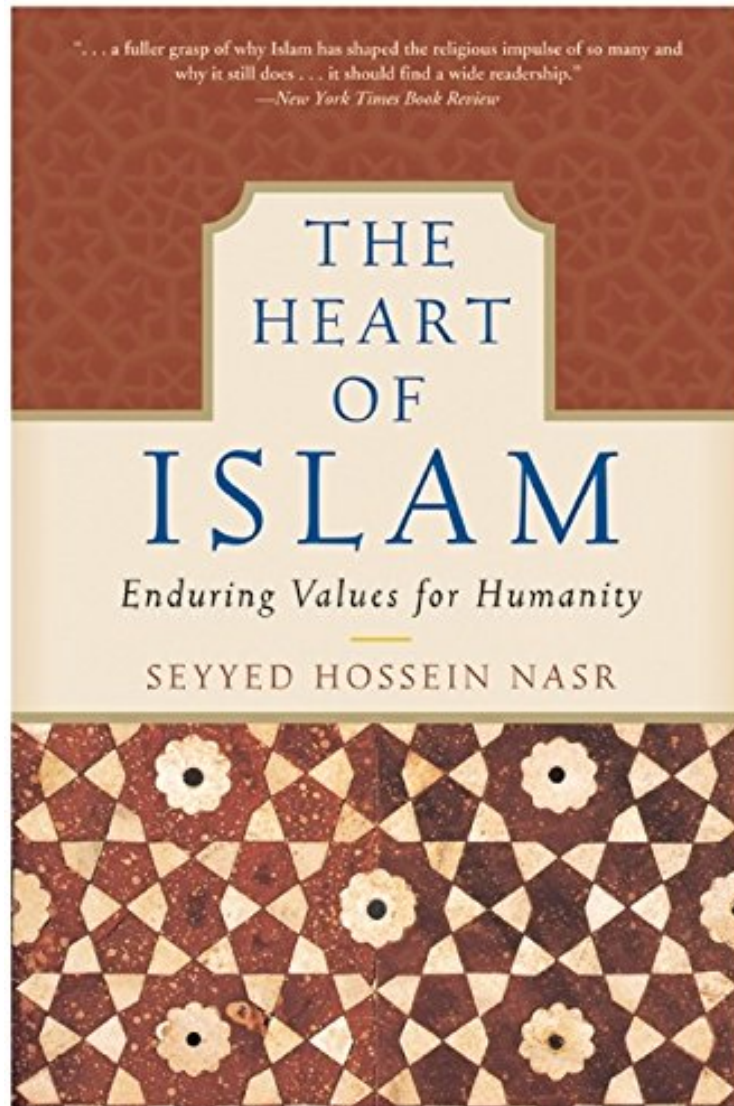


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The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity

Seyyed Hossein Nasr

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#298129 in Books Seyyed Hossein Nasr 2004-08-17 2004-08-17Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.00 x .79 x 5.311, .59 #File Name: 0060730641352 pagesHeart of Islam Enduring Values For Humanity | File size: 42.Mb

Seyyed Hossein Nasr : The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity:

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...By J. Ollisit is one to help in the understanding of the followers of a faith that is find only more questions.

As the specter of religious extremism has become a fact of life today, the temptation is great to allow the evil actions and perspectives of a minority to represent an entire tradition. In the case of Islam, there has been much recent confusion in the Western world centered on distorted portrayals of its core values. Born of ignorance, such confusion feeds the very problem at hand. In *The Heart of Islam* one of the great intellectual figures in Islamic history offers a timely presentation of the core spiritual and social values of Islam: peace, compassion, social justice, and respect for the other. Seizing this unique moment in history to reflect on the essence of his tradition, Seyyed Hossein Nasr seeks to "open a spiritual and intellectual space for mutual understanding." Exploring Islamic values in scripture, traditional sources, and history, he also shows their clear counterparts in the Jewish and Christian traditions, revealing the common ground of the Abrahamic faiths. Nasr challenges members of the world's civilizations to stop demonizing others while identifying themselves with pure goodness and to turn instead to a deeper understanding of those shared values that can solve the acute problems facing humanity today. "Muslims must ask themselves what went wrong within their own societies," he writes, "but the West must also pose the same question about itself . . . whether we are Muslims, Jews, Christians, or even secularists, whether we live in the Islamic world or in the West, we are in need of meaning in our lives, of ethical norms to guide our actions, of a vision that would allow us to live at peace with each other and with the rest of God's creation." Such help, he believes, lies at the heart of every religion and can lead the followers of the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) as well as other religious and spiritual traditions to a new future of mutual respect and common global purpose. *The Heart of Islam* is a landmark presentation of enduring value that offers hope to humanity, and a compelling portrait of the beauty and appeal of the faith of 1.2 billion people.

From Publishers Weekly Nasr, a professor at George Washington University and a living legend in Islamic studies, was commissioned by Harper San Francisco to write this book after the attacks of September 11. Presented as "an explanation of the authentic teachings of Islam anew in light of the challenges of the present-day situation," this is an adequate and accurate reference tool, particularly for comparisons of the text of the holy books of the three major, monotheistic Western religions. Further, Nasr's ability to perceive profound spiritual meaning from Islamic theory, though exploited only a few times in this book, has no rival. The writing is best when he's discussing his own life. He also succeeds when taking on current critics of Islam, especially his persuasive counter-arguments to the "What Went Wrong?" school of thought. However, Nasr's fans, and those seeking to improve their understanding of Islam, will be disappointed. In aiming to discuss each value that is significant in Islam, Nasr has created an unfocused, sometimes dull book. He discusses the importance of values like justice and community and distinguishes between true Islam and local, tribal culture, but the absence of a guiding thesis alienates the reader. Though his purpose is to counter negativity about Islam in the post-9/11 era, Nasr instead rambles on about esoteric, irrelevant points. This is an unengaging read that fails to illuminate the titular "heart" of Islam. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal HarperCollins commissioned this book to cut through misinformation and give American readers a clear sense of just what Islam is and what it isn't. A first-tier Islamic scholar, Nasr (George Washington Univ.) speaks for traditional Muslims (as distinct from "modernists" and "puritan reformers"), and it is hard to imagine a better introduction to the faith. Nasr does not sidestep the issues that non-Muslims have on their minds, but he addresses them within the context of the vitality and vision of Islam more generally. In the process, he conveys both the "outer sense" of the Qur'anic scripture and sacred traditions that shape the faith as a social phenomenon, and the "inner sense" that is the root of its spiritual power. Nasr does a very good job of expounding the commonalities and contrasts of Islam with other faiths, especially Judaism and Christianity. Rather than seeing Islamic strength as a threat, he argues that Islam and other religions share values that commit them to opposing the deadening effects both spiritual and literal of secularism and globalization. Recommended for all academic and public libraries. Steve Young, McHenry Cty. Coll., Crystal Lake, IL Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. This is exactly the right book... to counter the demonizing stereotypes of Islam proliferated by the war on terrorism (Huston Smith, author of *The World's Religions*) Professor Nasr has put the beauty and appeal of Islam into clear and readable English. (John Shelby Spong, author of *A New Christianity for a New World*) This sensitive, insightful and beautifully written book comes as a ray of sunshine. (Mark Juergensmeyer, author of *Terror in the Mind of God* Mark Juergensmeyer, author of *Terror in the Mind of God* Mark Juergensmeyer, author of *Terror in the Mind of God*) Filled with challenge and insight...an indispensable text. (Rabbi Michael Paley) A lasting, honest, and intimate tour of Islam's basic aspects... (The [New Jersey] Star-Ledger) A first-tier Islamic scholar ... it is hard to imagine a better introduction to the faith. (Library Journal) [I]t is hard to imagine a better introduction to the faith. (Library Journal) An illuminating new book that explores the spiritual and social values of the faith of one-fifth of humanity. (Christian Science Monitor) The most important study of Islam in all its breadth and all its depth available in the English language. (Gai Eaton, author of *Islam and the Destiny of Man*) Concise, clear, and eloquent, it has the

crystalline ring of the voice of reason and cuts through layers of ignorance. (The World I)